Ministry of
Human Resources

2003/04
Annual Service Plan Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA

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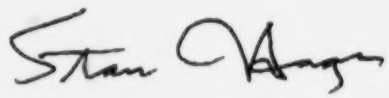
Accountability Statement

The 2003/04 Ministry of Human Resources Annual Service Plan Report was prepared under my direction and in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. This report compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the ministry's 2003/04 Service Plan. I am accountable for the ministry's results and the basis on which they have been reported.



Honourable Stan Hagen
Minister of Human Resources

June 29, 2004

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of Human Resources

It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Ministry of Human Resources for the 2003/04 fiscal year.

The ministry has continued to build on the successful implementation of new legislation that redesigned British Columbia's income assistance system (*Employment and Assistance Act* and *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, passed April 2002).

This new system provides assistance for British Columbians most in need while creating greater opportunities for employment for those clients who are able to work.

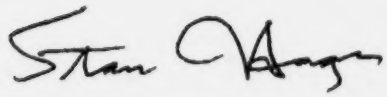
The ministry has made significant progress for clients in need of continuous support — people with disabilities. The earnings exemption was increased for the second consecutive year and is now $400 per month. A $20 million Disability Supports for Employment endowment — managed by the Vancouver Foundation — was established to provide supports that assist people with disabilities in the workplace. People with disabilities receive the highest rates of assistance offered by the ministry and have access to specialized programs and services to assist them to improve their independence and their lives.

In the past year, the ministry also redeveloped and expanded its suite of employment programs to meet the changing needs of clients and assist them in attaining jobs. New programs include the Bridging Employment program — for clients who have experienced abuse, and the English as a Second Language Training for Jobs program — where clients can improve their English and gain access to technical training. For clients receiving temporary assistance, the ministry focused on providing support and employment programs. This has resulted in the expected to work caseload dropping by more than half as these clients find jobs, leave income assistance and achieve self-reliance.

Our approach is working: since this government came to office, 87,000 former clients no longer rely on income assistance and the system is being made more sustainable for British Columbians in the future.

As part of an initiative to provide cost-effective and affordable services in 2003/04 the ministry completed its regional realignment to match boundaries and share common work assignments with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Ministry of Health Services. The Ministry of Human Resources continued our service delivery improvements with an emphasis on using new technology to improve accessibility for our clients in remote locations and during off-hours.

The ministry's accomplishments to date are a direct result of the expertise and professionalism shown by its staff in their service to communities across the province. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their exemplary dedication to supporting our clients achieve better futures for themselves and their families.



Honourable Stan Hagen
Minister of Human Resources

Message from the Deputy Minister

The 2003/04 Annual Service Plan Report of the Ministry of Human Resources reflects the ministry's activities over the past three years as it has redefined income assistance through the British Columbia Employment and Assistance program. The ministry has changed the culture of income assistance to one of self-reliance, active participation and independence.

The British Columbia Employment and Assistance program is designed to reflect the importance of employment as fundamental to individual and family well-being. Through the program, clients are equipped with the tools, such as the Employment Plan, to aid them in setting and meeting goals to successfully enter the labour market. Clients take personal responsibility for their job search and skills development to become independent of income assistance. Performance-based employment programs provide sustained job placement opportunities for clients.

At the same time, support is provided to individuals who require continuous assistance because of personal circumstances and barriers to employment. Persons with disabilities receive a range of services to further their independence. For those seeking employment, the ministry has implemented employment and pre-employment programs for clients with varying abilities to work.

Over the past three years, service delivery within the ministry has been streamlined to reflect the changing size and nature of the caseload. Improved policies and practices, as well as electronic service delivery have been introduced to meet client needs more effectively and efficiently. There are 112 offices across British Columbia and 1,896 full-time ministry employees to serve clients.

Through these accomplishments, the ministry is making significant progress in achieving its mandate of assisting people into sustainable employment and providing income assistance to those in need.

R. Ciceri

Robin Ciceri
Deputy Minister

Year-at-a-Glance Highlights

During the 2003/04 fiscal year the ministry continued to focus on employment and self-reliance and ensuring that those most in need received assistance. Major accomplishments this year included: assisting clients to independence; implementing the employment strategy for persons with disabilities; improving access and service delivery; and providing emergency social services to the victims of disasters faced by British Columbians in 2003.

Moving Clients to Independence

Employment is important to the overall health of BC's economy and to the well-being of individual British Columbians. The ministry's emphasis on moving clients to employment resulted in a continued decline in the number of individuals and families who received assistance. In March 2004, there were 87,000 fewer British Columbians who relied on income assistance, compared to June 2001.

Ministry employment programs, such as the Job Placement and Training for Jobs programs, contributed to the reduction in cases. Employment plans establish, for clients who are able to work, clear expectations to achieve independence. These plans are a key tool for motivating people and helping them focus on employment goals. Employment plans provided access to resources that help clients find jobs or acquire the skills they need to succeed in today's workplace.

The average number of cases that received assistance declined by 14,509 cases or 11.1 per cent since fiscal year 2002/03. The significant decline in two-parent (-25.6 per cent) and single-parent families (20.0 per cent) means that there were 12,587 fewer children whose parents relied on income assistance. By reducing parents' dependency on assistance the ministry is breaking the culture of generational welfare dependency.

BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) Cases by Family Type[1]

	Average 2002/03	Average 2003/04	Average Change	Average Change (Per cent)
BCEA Cases by Family Type				
Single Men	52,598	47,433	-5,165	-9.8%
Single Women	34,372	32,513	-1,859	-5.4%
Child in Home of Relative	4,170	4,368	+198	+4.7%
Couples	5,565	4,954	-611	-11.0%
Two-Parent Families	5,496	4,089	-1,407	-25.6%
Single Parent Families	28,322	22,657	-5,665	-20.0%
Total	**130,523**	**116,014**	**-14,509**	**-11.1%**

[1] A case is a family unit receiving income assistance that could be a single person, a couple, or a family with children. For example, a family of four people is counted as one case that includes four clients.

The average number of clients who received temporary assistance declined by 28,337 (33.9 per cent) since fiscal year 2002/03. Temporary assistance was provided to clients who were capable of financial independence through employment, or were unable to seek work because of a short-term condition. The decline in temporary assistance cases is attributed to a number of external and internal factors, including a growing economy and robust employment. Ministry related factors included the success of programming that assists clients to move to sustained employment and self-reliance.

The average number of clients who received continuous assistance increased in fiscal year 2003/04. Continuous assistance was provided to eligible individuals who were not expected to gain full financial independence through employment, including clients with disabilities and those with multiple barriers to employment.

BCEA Cases by Type of Assistance (March 2003 – March 2004)

	Average 2002/03	Average 2003/04	Average Change	Average Change (Per cent)
Temporary Assistance	83,531	55,194	-28,337	-33.9%
Continuous Assistance	46,993	60,820	+13,827	+29.0%
Total	**130,524**	**116,014**	**-14,510**	**-11.1%**

Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities

The Ministry of Human Resources introduced the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in April 2002 and continued the development of the strategy throughout 2003/04. The strategy focuses on new skills, training services and employment-related programs that assist persons with disabilities into the labour market and improve their employment outcomes.

Components of the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities included:

The Minister's Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities

The principle goal of the Minister's Council on Employment for Persons with Disabilities is to advise the Minister of Human Resources on strategies for increasing the employment, employability and independence of persons with disabilities, particularly through partnerships with business and industry throughout BC.

The Minister's Council is a "call to action" and a positive challenge to BC's business community.

The Disability Supports to Employment Fund

The Ministry of Human Resources established a $20 million Disability Supports for Employment Fund administered by the Vancouver Foundation. This fund provides specialized accommodation, tools and services to support people with disabilities in the workplace. Employment supports include: aids for hearing, seeing, mobility or agility; adaptations to computer hardware and software; and vehicle or structural modifications.

The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD)

EPPD is a specialized employment program for persons with disabilities who wish to participate more fully in their community. The program supports employment-related activities for those working part-time, full-time, in self-employment or in voluntary employment.

Streamlining Service Delivery

Since June 2001, the ministry's income assistance caseload fell by 87,000 people as a result of the ministry's shift in focus — moving people towards sustainable employment while continuing to assist those most in need. During this time the ministry has also placed almost 30,000 income assistance clients in jobs, and the number of clients with employment related obligations — those who are able to work — dropped by over 70 per cent. As a result, the ministry was able to provide effective services to clients across the province with fewer resources. By March 31, 2004 the Ministry of Human Resources amalgamated 27 offices across the province.

Firestorm 2003

During the summer and fall of 2003, British Columbians experienced major fire and flooding across the province. Emergency Social Services (ESS) responded by providing support to individuals and families affected by these major disasters.

Firestorm 2003 was the largest incident involving Emergency Social Services in British Columbia's history. Over 37,000 people registered with ESS at 17 reception centres and five group lodging facilities across the province. Over 6,000 volunteers, municipal and regional district staff, and ministry employees responded to this emergency.

In October 2003 alone ESS provided support and assistance to over 1,400 people involved in five major floods and storms, 21 house fires and an apartment fire. In total, ESS responded to 297 incidents throughout the year and provided emergency support to over 40,000 British Columbians.

Ministry Role and Services

Ministry Overview

This overview identifies the principles that guided the ministry to provide services and programs during the fiscal year 2003/04 and it confirms the vision, mission, and values that were reflected in the ministry's service delivery as set out in the 2003/04 - 2005/06 Service Plan.

The Ministry of Human Resources continued to support British Columbians in their efforts to be self-reliant by assisting them to move from income assistance to sustainable employment, and by providing income assistance to those most in need.

The ministry was guided by two primary pieces of legislation, the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*. Through these two Acts the ministry continued to address the generational dependency cycle, improving the prospects of children by supporting the efforts of their parents to find and sustain employment and ending the on again, off again pattern that many income assistance clients have experienced.

The ministry provided programs to assist clients to find and maintain employment. Temporary assistance was available to eligible people who were capable of financial independence through employment, and ongoing assistance was available to those who were not expected to gain independence through employment. The ministry provided supplementary assistance to clients with disabilities, persons with persistent multiple barriers to employment, children, seniors and clients requiring medical, dental or transportation services. The ministry worked closely with the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) to ensure that Emergency Social Services (ESS) were available to families and communities in crisis.

A key element of the BC Employment and Assistance program (BCEA) continued to be the ability of clients to access services that assist them toward employment. For some, support and assistance in undertaking a work search was all that was needed. Others who sought assistance needed more extensive employment supports. For persons with disabilities or with barriers to employment income assistance provided other kinds of services and supports. Applicants were required to complete a three-week self-directed work search before applying for income assistance. All people who contacted a ministry office could be assessed for emergency needs, such as an urgent need for food, shelter, or medical attention, and those who had an emergency need received an expedited application for income assistance.

The ministry maintained the principle that employment encourages self-reliance and reduces dependence on income assistance. It helps break the cycle of dependency that can begin the first time a client receives income assistance. BCEA actively encourages self-reliance through employment, an approach that benefits families and individuals over the long-term.

The ministry provided services to the following client groups: clients who received temporary assistance, clients with persistent multiple barriers to employment, persons with disabilities and people in need of supplementary assistance.

Clients who were able to work were assisted to find jobs through employment plans. Employment plans outlined the actions clients were required to take in seeking work. They provided access to the tools and supports clients needed to find a job and become independent of income assistance.

Ministry Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

The Ministry of Human Resources envisions a province in which those British Columbians in need are assisted to achieve their social and economic potential.

Mission

The Ministry of Human Resources provides services that move people toward sustainable employment and assists individuals and families in need.

Values

The Ministry of Human Resources' values are reflected in its work every day, and support the government's broader strategic plan and priorities. The government's core values are integrity, fiscal responsibility, accountability, respect and choice.

The ministry's values are:

- **Personal responsibility** — The ministry emphasizes personal responsibility by assisting clients who are able to work to find employment and achieve independence. The ministry supports the efforts of clients who are working to enhance their self-reliance and involvement in their communities.
- **Active participation** — Clients who are able to work are expected to actively seek employment. The ministry supports these efforts with work search and job placement services, targeted employment training and tools such as employment plans. The ministry provides additional/specialized supports to persons with disabilities to maximize their self-reliance.
- **Innovative partnerships** — The ministry is developing creative and innovative ways of working with a range of service providers and external agencies, as well as directly with clients.
- **Citizen confidence** — Maintaining public confidence in ministry programs and initiatives is fundamental to the ability to develop innovative solutions to enhancing clients' self-reliance.

- **Fairness and transparency** — The ministry functions in a fair manner, with its priorities and decisions clearly visible.
- **Clear outcomes** — The ministry sets out clear outcomes, whether in the form of clearly defined goals that determine ministry direction, responsibilities outlined in client employment plans or employee performance and development plans.
- **Accountability for results** — The ministry is accountable to government and all British Columbians for results through performance management systems.

Ministry Operating Context

The British Columbia economy grew 2.2 per cent in 2003, tied for fourth among provinces with Alberta, after growth of 2.4 per cent in 2002. Domestic activity was the main driver of economic growth last year. Consumer spending, which accounts for about two-thirds of all economic activity in the province, benefited from continued low interest rates and robust employment growth. In 2003, housing starts recorded significant growth of 21 per cent and the British Columbia economy posted average annual job growth of 2.5 per cent. Overall, growth in business investment accelerated to 8.2 per cent, mainly reflecting strength in the residential construction sector. The Canadian dollar appreciated rapidly in 2003 and the higher value of the currency had a significant impact on the trade sector. As a result, export growth was limited to 0.5 per cent growth in 2003, while imports grew a stronger 4.3 per cent.

External Factors

A number of factors external to the ministry contributed to the decline in the income assistance caseload during 2003/04:

- **Job creation** — According to BC Stats over the past two years, British Columbia has created 159,000 jobs, leading the country with the fastest growth rate. In 2003 job growth was almost completely in full-time employment, with many jobs created in the tourism and service sector.
- **Average income** — Last year more than two million people were working in British Columbia and their take-home pay grew. Statistics Canada states the average weekly earnings in British Columbia have increased by 2.24 per cent over the past year.
- **Unemployment rate** — In 2002/03 the unemployment rate remained relatively constant. The provincial unemployment rate, as reported by Statistics Canada was 8 per cent in March 2004, slightly higher than the 7.9 per cent reported in April 2003.

Two significant external trends are potential contributors to an increased demand for income assistance in the future:

- **Population** — BC Stats indicates the province's population grew by 0.95 per cent between 2003 and 2004 and it is predicted that it will grow by another 1.0 per cent in 2005.

- **Persons with Disabilities** — The proportion of people with disabilities living in the province is increasing relative to the total population. Persons with disabilities often require assistance or support from the ministry.

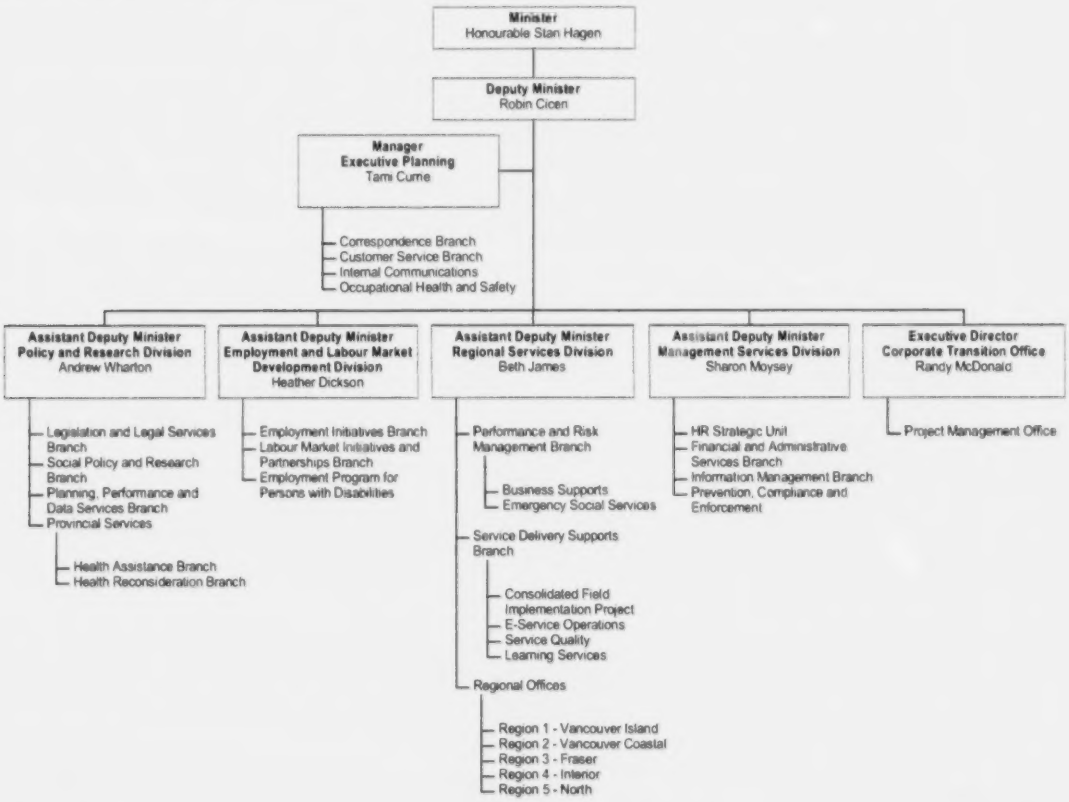
Internal Factors

A number of internal factors contributed to the ministry's ability to achieve its goals and objectives for 2003/04:

- **Employment Plans** — The ministry emphasized the employment plan as the primary ongoing case management tool to move clients into sustainable employment. Changes were introduced to the development of employment plans — establishing minimum review requirements, assessing compliance, applying appropriate sanctions and providing active support for clients with employment-related obligations. To ensure those most in need continued to receive assistance while looking for work, the ministry developed policy that provided assistance beyond the two-year time limit for clients who were compliant with their employment plans.
- **Focus on clients with disabilities** — The ministry had a large group of clients with disabilities — people who have tremendous potential for participating in their communities. To ensure the ministry provides assistance to those most in need, a comprehensive review of clients designated as Persons with Disabilities was completed in 2003/04. The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD), implemented in September 2003, assisted persons with disabilities to maximize their independence through employment, volunteer programs and income assistance.
- **Workforce adjustment** — The Ministry of Human Resources' offices across the province were amalgamated in 2003/04. The ministry reduced its workforce by 324 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions. Approximately 300 positions were identified through early retirement, voluntary departure and existing vacancies.
- **Regional realignment** — On September 30, 2003, the Ministry of Human Resources changed its regional structure from nine regions to five. The new regional boundaries matched those of the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Ministry of Health Services. As a result, ministries had common work assignment areas and were able to work better together, providing more streamlined services.

Ministry Structure and Core Business Areas

During 2003/04, the ministry was organized under four divisions: Policy and Research Division, Employment and Labour Market Development Division, Regional Services Division, and Management Services Division. Frontline services were delivered to clients through 112 offices located in the ministry's five regions. In addition, contracted services such as job readiness and employment training programs were provided across the province by agencies funded by the ministry.



The ministry's major services were provided under the BC Employment and Assistance program (BCEA), that emphasized self-reliance and personal responsibility, and was designed to reduce long-term dependence on income assistance by those able to work.

For clients unable to work because of a disability, BCEA offered income assistance and an array of programs to assist in enhancing involvement in their communities. The ministry also provided supplementary services such as bus passes and emergency social services to meet pressing needs.

During 2003/04, the ministry delivered its programs and services through six core business areas, each of which was directly tied to the ministry's vision, mission and goals.

Core Business: Employment Programs

Employment programs were available to assist clients to find and sustain employment. Individualized employment plans that were signed by clients could include directed job search, referral to job placement programs and specific training for employment. Specialized programs that support persons with disabilities were included within this core business area.

Core Business: Temporary Assistance

Temporary assistance was available to clients who were capable of financial independence through employment, or were unable to seek work because of a short-term condition, as described in the *Employment and Assistance Act*.

Core Business: Continuous Assistance

Continuous assistance was available to eligible individuals who were not expected to gain complete financial independence through employment, including clients with disabilities and those with multiple barriers to employment.

Core Business: Supplementary Assistance

Supplementary assistance was available to eligible people, providing health and other supports such as emergency shelters, bus passes, health services for persons with disabilities, and user fees for continuing care and alcohol and drug treatment facilities.

Core Business: Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal was created in September 2002 to assist clients with timely decision-making through a single-level, regionally based appeal system that was available for individuals who wished to appeal decisions of the ministry. The tribunal operates independently of the ministry.

Core Business: Executive and Support Services

Executive and support services provided salaries, benefits, allowances and operating expenses for the minister's office, ministry corporate services and service delivery.

CLIENT GROUP		
Clients capable of financial independence through employment.	Eligible clients with disabilities.	Clients in need of supplementary assistance.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE, CONTINUOUS ASSISTANCE, SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE, EMPLOYMENT AND ASSISTANCE TRIBUNAL

EXECUTIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
BC Employment and Assistance clients achieve independence through sustained employment. **OBJECTIVES** Clients find employment through work search and job placement services. Clients acquire specific job skills through targeted training for employment. Persons with disabilities who seek work are supported through employment programs.	BC Employment and Assistance services support self-reliance. **OBJECTIVES** Enquirers actively seek work. Applicants and clients enter into employment plans as a condition of eligibility.	BC Employment and Assistance services provide continuous assistance for eligible clients. **OBJECTIVES** Persons with multiple barriers participated in their communities. Persons with disabilities work or volunteer as they are able. Assistance is provided to individuals who are not able to achieve independence through employment.	BC Employment and Assistance services provide supplementary assistance for eligible clients. **OBJECTIVES** Homeless individuals have access to safe emergency accommodations. Individuals and families have access to short-term disaster assistance through the Emergency Social Services Program. Eligible clients have access to supplementary health services. Eligible seniors and persons with disabilities have access to public transit.	The ministry is a responsive and motivating employer. **OBJECTIVES** Employees have the tools to adapt to and benefit from change. The ministry recruits and retains a workforce that is competent, capable, and flexible. Staff actions align with ministry goals and objectives. The ministry's working environment encourages productivity and innovation.	The ministry operates effectively, openly, and accountably. **OBJECTIVES** Ministry processes and systems support accountability for results. Service delivery is streamlined and effective. Individuals have access to an impartial and responsive appeal system.

Update on *New Era* Commitments

In a June 25, 2001 letter to the Minister of Human Resources, Premier Gordon Campbell identified three key priorities for the ministry to focus on in its first three years:

1. Continue to streamline regional service delivery to clients of income assistance.
2. Implement training and support programs to assist income assistance clients in returning to the workforce.
3. With the Administrative Justice Project, develop a single internal appeal process.

1. Streamlining regional service delivery.

On September 30, 2003, the Ministry of Human Resources moved its regional structure from nine regions to five. New regional boundaries matched those of our partner ministries — Ministry of Children and Family Development and Ministry of Health Services. As a result, ministries had common work assignment areas and were able to work better together, providing more streamlined and coordinated services.

The ministry continued to develop longer-term Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) initiatives, such as expanding the client call centre. This enables staff, over time, to spend more time serving clients, improve public access to ministry information and improve the ministry's capacity to meet its goals.

To assist in meeting current and future service plan requirements in a rapidly changing environment, the ministry began exploring ways to adapt business processes to meet future challenges. The Process Improvement Project was established to review and redesign employment planning and the financial eligibility processes.

Specifically, the Process Improvement Project was implemented to:

- Standardize and streamline work processes to free up staff time for value-added interactions with clients that focus on moving clients towards sustainable employment;
- Increase the integrity of the ministry's services by ensuring a consistent service delivery, regardless of how or where clients are served across the province; and
- Facilitate the sharing of knowledge by identifying best practices, reviewing these practices, and then disseminating them across the province.

2. Implementing training and support programs to assist income assistance clients in returning to the workforce.

The Job Placement Program continued and was refined in 2003/04 to support clients in their move to independence. In partnership with contracted agencies, the program provided a range of services that included assessing clients' job-readiness, supporting clients to find employment, monitoring clients' progress in the workplace and providing support to employers.

The Training for Jobs Program was implemented in December 2002. The program continued in 2003/04 to provide short-term, integrated training to enable clients — especially those who face barriers to employment, and those who have not found

employment with the assistance of other ministry programs — to enter or return to sustainable employment as quickly as possible. Contracted service providers worked with clients to identify their training needs, provide skill-specific training, place clients in employment and support them to sustain that employment over a period of 18 months.

The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities was fully implemented in September 2003. The program provided a range of specialized services to support persons with disabilities to take on employment or employment-related activities. The program included pre-employment, employment planning and employment services. It provided supports for persons with disabilities in the workplace. Clients who were not seeking independence through employment were supported to work part-time or participate in volunteer activities in their communities.

The ministry also implemented the Bridging Employment Program, which assisted survivors of violence and abuse to move toward greater self-reliance, and the English as a Second Language Training for Jobs program that improved English and provided access to technical training.

3. Development of a streamlined appeal process.

The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal had been introduced in September 2002. Developed in conjunction with the Administrative Justice Project, the Tribunal provided a single, streamlined, independent process for reviewing clients' appeals in an open, fair and timely way. It replaced the previous multi-step appeal process, under which appeals sometimes took as long as six months to be concluded. With this process, regional panels continued to adjudicate appeals within the legislated time frame of 15 business days.

Performance Reporting

Overview of Ministry Goals — see Appendix A

Report on Results

Results Achievement Summary Table

Total Measures	Results	Measure
8	Results Achieved	1.1 Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months. 1.3 Percentage of Persons with Disabilities with employment income. 2.2 Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving income assistance. 2.3 Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving temporary assistance. 2.4 Percentage of caseload receiving temporary assistance. 5.1 Percentage of employees with performance and development plans in place. 6.1 Percentage of program and service contracts that are performance-based. 6.2 Percentage of appeal hearings commenced within 15 business days.
2	Benchmark Established	1.2 Percentage of Training for Jobs clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months. 2.1 Percentage of enquirers who contact BC Employment and Assistance offices and are diverted to employment.
3	Results Progressing	3.1 Percentage of caseload receiving continuous assistance. 3.2 Percentage of continuous assistance clients who work or volunteer. 4.1 Number of bus passes available to eligible seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

Goal 1

BC Employment and Assistance Clients Achieve Independence Through Sustained Employment.

Core Business Area: Employment Programs

Objective 1

Clients find employment through work search and job placement services.

Key Strategies

Refer clients to the Job Placement program.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 1.1: Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	Variance	Target Achieved
1.1 Percentage of Job Placement clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months	80%	84.4%	+4.4%	Yes

The Job Placement program was designed to assist the most job-ready clients to obtain sustainable employment. Depending on client needs, service providers delivered a range of pre-placement, employment placement and post-placement services and supports. All Job Placement program contracts were performance-based. Service providers received payments when they placed clients in jobs and supported them to maintain employment and remain independent of assistance.

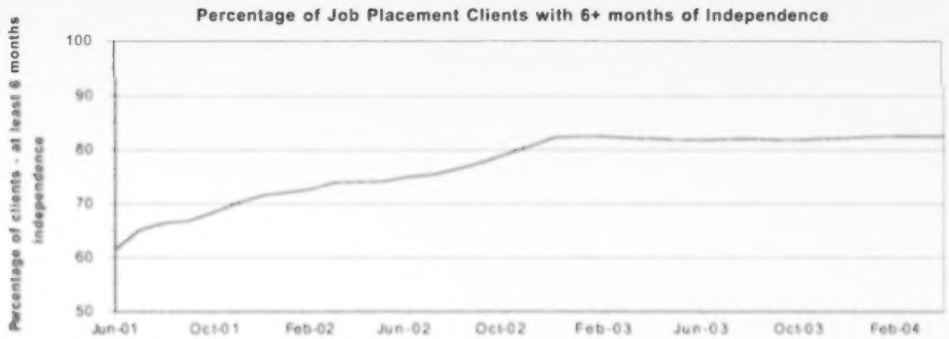
The key element of success in the Job Placement program was that clients find and sustain employment. To determine the success of this program the ministry measured the percentage of clients who achieved six months of independence after being placed in a job by one of the Job Placement program contractors.

In 2003/04 the ministry achieved and surpassed the target set out for this performance measure. This program continues to contribute to the ministry's success in achieving independence for clients through sustained employment. Since June 2001, over 28,000 Job Placement program clients have achieved independence.

Historical Context

Since its introduction clients have increasingly achieved at least six months of independence from income assistance through the Job Placement program. The time series graph below shows that in June 2001, 61.4 per cent of clients achieved this milestone and the rate of

client success consistently rises over time. This success is a result of client actions, program refinement and the ministry's continued emphasis on employment and self-reliance.



Objective 2

Clients acquire specific job skills through targeted training for employment.

Key Strategies

Refer clients to the Training for Jobs pilot program.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 1.2: Percentage of Training for Jobs clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	Target Achieved
1.2 Percentage of Training for Jobs clients who remain independent of income assistance for at least six months	Establish Baseline	70%	Yes

The Training for Jobs program focused on providing people who have barriers to employment with the specific skills and job placement opportunities they needed to gain sustainable employment. Contractors identified specific training needs, trained people, placed them in jobs and provided job retention supports and services. The success of the Training for Jobs program is measured by the proportion of clients with barriers to employment who became independent of income assistance for at least six months.

This measure is similar to the Job Placement program's measure with a lower baseline. This lower baseline reflects the fact that clients participating in Training for Jobs faced more barriers to employment, in general, than clients who participated in the Job Placement program. It also reflects some design differences between the two programs.

Objective 3

Persons with disabilities who seek work are supported through employment programs.

Key Strategies

Implement the second phase of the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 1.3: Percentage of Persons with Disabilities with employment income.

Performance Measure	2002/03 Target	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
1.3 Percentage of Persons with Disabilities with employment income	11.2%	11.0%	11.5%	12.1%	+0.6%	Yes

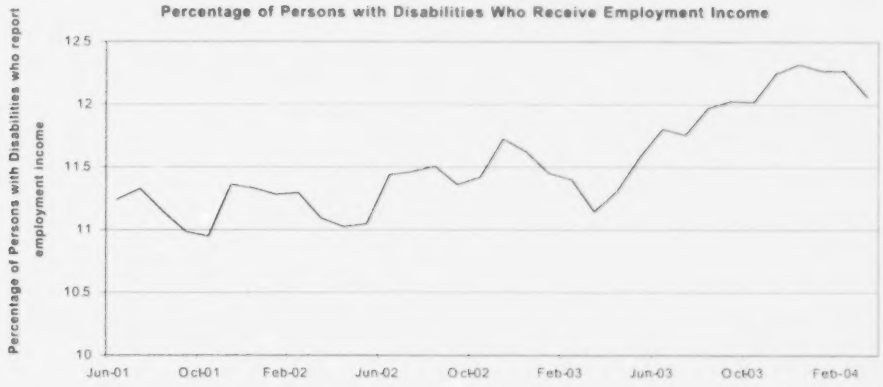
The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD) provided employment supports and specialized job training and job placement services. The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities assisted persons with disabilities to participate in employment-related activities to the best of their ability. This program recognized that individuals experience disabilities in varying degrees, at different stages of their lives. The EPPD included Pre-Employment Services, Planning and Employment Services, Self-Employment Services, Disability Supports, and Assistive Technology. The EPPD provided a comprehensive approach to employment programs for persons with disabilities that is unique to British Columbia. The program was implemented in September 2003 and was delivered through contracted resources.

Voluntary Participation Plans (VPP) were introduced in June 2003. The VPP was a planning tool for clients who did not have employment-related obligations but who wished to access ministry employment services and programs. By entering into a VPP, Persons with Disabilities were provided an opportunity to participate in programs which enhanced their employability. These plans assisted Persons with Disabilities to find employment and decrease their dependence on assistance.

Effective April 1, 2003, the ministry increased the earnings exemption for Persons with Disabilities from $300 to $400 per month. Earnings exemptions allowed Persons with Disabilities to keep a portion of their after-tax employment income. These exemptions were designed to encourage Persons with Disabilities who were able to work to maintain their skills, participate in the workplace as best they can, and have a greater financial independence. The increased exemption and the introduction of the EPPD and VPP all contributed to the ministry surpassing this performance measure target.

Historical Context

Persons with Disabilities have increasingly reported employment income since June 2001. The time series graph shows the success of clients who achieved more self-reliance through the reporting of income. Factors contributing to this increase were the earnings exemption, the supports of the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities and the Voluntary Participation Plan. This graph shows that income reported varies throughout the year. This was attributable, in part, to the cyclical ability of some persons with disabilities to have ongoing employment.



Goal 2

BC Employment and Assistance Services Support Self-Reliance.

Core Business Area: Temporary Assistance

Objective 1

Enquirers actively seek work.

Key Strategies

Require enquirers to undertake a three-week self-directed work search.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 2.1: Percentage of enquirers who contact BC Employment and Assistance Offices and are diverted to employment.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	Target Achieved
2.1 Percentage of enquirers who contact BC Employment and Assistance offices and are diverted to employment	Establish Baseline	49%	Yes

Conducting a work search was a requirement of individuals who contacted the ministry to request income assistance and must have been completed prior to their application for assistance.

The ministry provided services to assist enquirers to find employment prior to applying for income assistance. Services included web-based orientation sessions, work search guidelines, and an independent work search toolkit. The ministry's emphasis on personal responsibility was demonstrated by the importance placed on assisting clients and enquirers to become self-reliant through employment as quickly as possible.

This benchmark measure reports the percentage of enquirers or applicants for whom assistance was not granted. This may have been because the enquirer did not return to complete an application or that the applicant was not eligible for assistance. Due to difficulties determining why an enquirer did not return to apply for assistance, this measure has been discontinued in the 2004/05 – 2006/07 Service Plan. This performance measure only determined the success of enquirers finding alternatives to income assistance.

Objective 2

Applicants and clients enter into employment plans as a condition of eligibility.

Key Strategies

Establish mandatory obligations to meet employment plan goals for all clients.

Require all existing clients to complete employment plans and review their eligibility.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 2.2: Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving income assistance.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Establish Baseline	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
2.2 Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving income assistance	6.0%	4.5%	4.8%	3.9%	–0.9%	Yes

Measure 2.3: Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving temporary assistance.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Establish Baseline	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
2.3 Percentage of British Columbia's population receiving temporary assistance	4.5%	3.5%	3.0%	2.0%	–1.0%	Yes

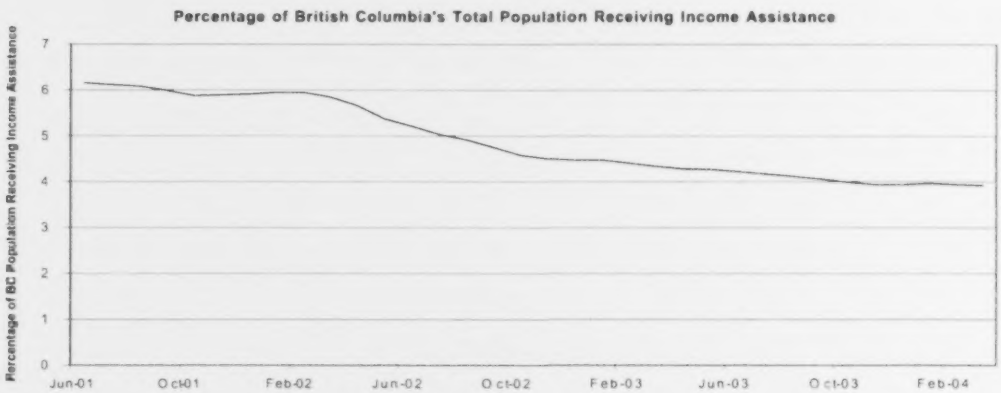
These two performance measures provide an indication of the overall effectiveness of policies and strategies that assisted enquirers' and clients' move toward independence. They were affected by external factors such as the economy, job availability and population growth.

Measure 2.2 indicates that the ministry surpassed its 2003/04 target to reduce the proportion of British Columbians who received income assistance. A growing economy and robust employment growth contributed to this achievement. Internal factors that contributed to this success were the ministry's focus on employment and personal responsibility. Policy enhancements, such as the employment planning process, provided opportunities for greater numbers of ministry clients to achieve independence.

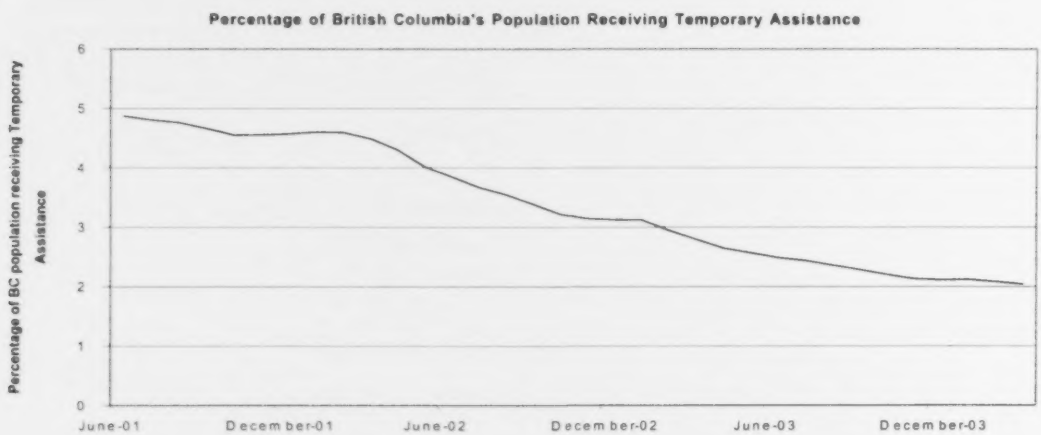
The reduction in the proportion of British Columbians who received temporary assistance, as outlined in Measure 2.3, indicates the greatest reduction in the caseload, relative to the general population, was of clients who were most able to achieve independence through sustained employment.

Historical Context

The percentage of British Columbia's population who required income assistance has been on a steady decline since June 2001. The time series graph below shows that this percentage began the most significant decline in fiscal year 2002/03. The introduction of amendments to the existing legislation in April 2002 marked the beginning of a sharp decline. The introduction of the *Employment and Assistance Act* and *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act* in September 2002 continued this trend.



As with the overall reduction in the percentage of British Columbians who required income assistance, the percentage of temporary assistance clients also declined. The time series graph below indicates that more British Columbians found alternatives to income assistance since June 2001. More temporary assistance clients found employment during this same time period.



Measure 2.4: Percentage of total caseload receiving temporary assistance.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Establish Baseline	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
2.4 Percentage of total caseload receiving temporary assistance	76%	70%	64%	48%	–16%	Yes

This performance measure indicates the proportion of the total caseload that was expected to need income assistance for a temporary period of time. Due to the success in moving clients and enquirers into sustained employment it was anticipated the remaining caseload will be increasingly made up of continuous assistance clients.

New Measures (2004/05)

1. Percentage of BC's population aged 19-64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations.

Clients who leave income assistance for jobs have higher incomes, their children are less likely to receive income assistance as adults, and they attain higher levels of training and education. Children whose parents work are more likely to complete high school and be actively involved in the labour market as adults.

Increasing the number of clients who find employment is a critical aspect of the ministry's mission. As such, the ministry developed this new performance measure to track the ministry's success in this area. All temporary assistance clients have employment-related obligations, except for those who are not required to seek work (e.g., parents of a young child). This new measure provides a more precise accounting of those clients who are expected to achieve independence from income assistance.

New Performance Measure	2001/02 Baseline	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target
Percentage of BC's population aged 19-64 receiving temporary assistance with employment-related obligations (NEW)	3.4%	1.7%	2.2%	0.9%	0.87%

2. Percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who have an active employment plan.

Employment plans are the foundation for planning between ministry staff and clients. These plans establish, for clients who are able to work, clear expectations to achieve independence. This process ensures clients' access to tools and supports required for finding a job and becoming independent of income assistance. Changes were introduced to the development of employment plans in 2003/04.

The new measure reflects the importance of employment plans as a tool to assist clients in moving toward independence. Staff began the process of developing employment plans for clients with employment-related obligations in 2003/04 and will continue to

ensure all employment plans are current and active. Higher percentages for this measure indicate success in encouraging self-reliance and in assisting clients achieve independence. In 2003/04 a baseline has been established.

New Performance Measure	2003/04 Baseline	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target
Percentage of clients with employment-related obligations who have an active employment plan (NEW)	63.4%	85%	95%	100%

3. Percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers who participate in a ministry program.

Some ministry clients face significant barriers to achieving self-reliance through employment such as limited life-skills, minimal employment history, and literacy concerns. The ministry provides clients who face multiple barriers to employment with services aimed at increasing their self-reliance by developing life skills and by providing pre-employment opportunities. Increasing the level of self-reliance of people with multiple barriers to employment contributes to the ministry's ability to achieve its mission.

This new performance measure tracks the percentage of persons with multiple barriers who are served by ministry programs. Involvement in ministry programs is simply a first step. The ministry works to understand the kinds of barriers these clients face so that programs and services can more effectively address their issues. As programs and services for this client group are refined, more precise expected outcomes for clients will be developed.

New Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline
Percentage of persons with persistent multiple barriers who participate in a ministry program (NEW)	Establish Baseline

Goal 3

BC Employment and Assistance Services Provide Continuous Assistance to Those Clients Most in Need.

Core Business Area: Continuous Assistance.

Objective 1

Assistance is provided to individuals who are not able to achieve independence through employment.

Key Strategies

Provide continuous assistance and support services to those clients most in need.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 3.1: Percentage of total caseload receiving continuous assistance.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Establish Baseline	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
3.1 Percentage of total caseload receiving continuous assistance	22%	28%	29%	52%	+23%	No

With the success the ministry achieved in 2003/04 in reducing the number of temporary assistance clients, the percentage of clients receiving continuous assistance has grown. Continuous assistance consisted of Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers. As of 2003/04 the continuous assistance caseload, for the first time, represented over 50 per cent of the total caseload

This performance measure is important as it shows the ministry was providing assistance and support services to those most in need.

Objective 2

Persons with multiple barriers participate in their communities.

Persons with Disabilities work or volunteer as they are able.

Key Strategies

Refer clients with multiple barriers to the Community Assistance Program for services that assist them to participate in their communities. Refinements to programs available to Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) in 2004/05 will help this group move towards achieving greater self-reliance.

Implement programs for Persons with Disabilities that assist them to find employment or to participate in the community, as they are able.

Measure 3.2: Percentage of continuous assistance clients who work or volunteer.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Establish Baseline	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
3.2 Percentage of continuous assistance clients who work or volunteer	14%	14%	17%	12.6%	–4.4%	No

To support greater independence and self-reliance, the ministry provided encouragement and assistance to continuous assistance clients to participate in employment or volunteer programs, as appropriate. As previously noted, the Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD) assisted persons with disabilities to participate in employment-related activities to the best of their ability. The Community Assistance Program was designed specifically to help clients overcome barriers to self-reliance.

The 2003/04 target and actual percentages indicate the ministry has missed this target. However, this variance actually reflects that the growth rate of the continuous assistance caseload has outpaced the percentage of continuous assistance clients who accessed employment or volunteer programs.

Goal 4

BC Employment and Assistance Services Provide Supplementary Assistance for Eligible Clients.

Core Business Area: Supplementary Assistance — the ministry provided a range of services through supplementary assistance.

Objective 1

Eligible seniors and Persons with Disabilities have access to public transit.

Key Strategies

Provide low cost public transit passes to eligible seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 4.1: Number of bus passes available to eligible seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

Performance Measure	2001/02 Baseline	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
4.1 Number of bus passes available to eligible seniors and Persons with Disabilities	51,400	54,500	58,500	57,734	–766	No

Supplementary assistance included a range of services that were provided to eligible clients. Supplementary assistance was provided for multiple objectives. The ministry supported low-income seniors and Persons with Disabilities by providing subsidized bus passes. This performance measure indicates the number of bus passes the ministry has issued.

Bus passes were issued on a calendar year basis and could be purchased at any time of the year. Replacement passes were also provided at a minimal cost. This replacement fee escalated with the number of passes replaced. The variance of the measure was -1.3 per cent for 2003/04. The provision of bus passes is based solely on demand by the public and is not a strong indicator of the ministry's business, as such this target is not included in the 2004/05 - 2006/07 Service Plan.

Objective 2

Homeless individuals have access to safe emergency accommodation.

Key Strategies

Provide emergency accommodation to the homeless who have no other resources.

Performance Measures and Results

The ministry spent $12.1 million in 2003/04 on over 700 year-round emergency hostel and shelter beds and $750,000 on 193 additional beds during the cold wet-weather season. On January 6, 2004, the ministry committed an additional $25,000 to fund over 90 emergency hostel/shelter beds because of the extreme winter weather.

In 2003/04 the ministry began a review of the Emergency Shelter Program to identify opportunities to strengthen the program, build upon the partnership between the ministry and its service providers and confirm program outcomes and results.

Objective 3

Individuals and families have access to short-term disaster assistance through the Emergency Social Services (ESS) program.

Key Strategies

Provide short-term assistance through the ESS program to those forced from their homes by disasters.

Performance Measures and Results

Emergency Social Services provided short-term assistance to British Columbians who were forced to leave their homes because of fire, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies. This assistance included food, lodging, clothing, emotional support and family reunification.

No specific performance measure was identified for the Emergency Social Services program. Throughout the summer and fall of 2003 British Columbia dealt with major fire and flooding across the province. Emergency Social Services responded by providing support to individuals and families affected by these major disasters.

Firestorm 2003 was the largest incident involving Emergency Social Services in British Columbia's history. Over 37,000 people registered with ESS at 17 reception centres and five group lodging facilities across the province. Over 6,000 volunteers, municipal and regional district staff, and ministry employees responded to this emergency.

Objective 4

Eligible clients have access to supplementary health services.

Key Strategies

Provide designated health services to those who are eligible.

Performance Measures and Results

Health supplements were available to provide health assistance to eligible clients. The ministry provided supplemental health assistance to those most in need — children, people with disabilities and people with persistent multiple barriers to employment. The Healthy Kids program removed one of the barriers of moving from welfare to work, and assists those families with low- and moderate-income with their children's basic dental and optical expenses. For employable clients, the ministry provided emergency dental services for the relief of pain and basic optical services.

Additional health supplements included: medical transportation, diet supplements, dental and orthodontia, optical, medical supplies, medical equipment, and orthotics and bracing, as well as other therapeutic services.

New Measures (2004/05)

Percentage of clients receiving a service, who are confirmed eligible for the service.

This measure tracks the percentage of clients receiving a supplementary assistance service. A higher percentage for this measure indicates that the ministry is successfully focusing its resources on assisting those who are most in need.

New Performance Measure	2003/04 Baseline	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target
Percentage of clients receiving a service, who are confirmed for the service (NEW)	100%	100%	100%	100%

Goal 5

The Ministry is a Responsive and Motivating Employer.

Core Business Area: Executive and Support Services

Objective 1

The ministry recruits and retains a workforce that is competent, capable and flexible.

Staff actions align with ministry goals and objectives.

Key Strategies

Define core competencies and selection standards for key ministry positions.

Implement employee performance, planning and development and review processes and tools.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 5.1: Percentage of employees with performance and development plans in place.

Performance Measure	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
5.1 Percentage of employees with performance and development plans in place	50%	75%	+25%	Yes

An important consideration for the ministry was the need for staff to have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities, and how they contribute to the ministry's goals. This performance measure gauges the success of the ministry in implementing performance and development plans that assist staff to connect their daily actions to the ministry Service Plan.

Specific skill sets, called competencies, were identified for key positions throughout the ministry. Performance and development plans have been introduced to set work and development goals for employees based on these competencies.

Objective 2

Employees have the tools to adapt to and benefit from change.

Key Strategies

Consistently address change management issues in all ministry project plans.

Performance Measures and Results

Ministry staff have undergone several changes since the BC Employment and Assistance legislative changes in September 2002. Policy resulting from this legislative change continued to be refined throughout 2003/04. New resources, guidelines and tools were developed to assist staff in applying new policy and regulations. Development began in the fall of 2003 on an Online Resource for staff that will provide access to ministry policy information, standards and tools. As well, staff from nine regions were amalgamated into five regions, standardizing the ministry's regions with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Ministry of Health Services regions.

Alternate service delivery methods continued to be explored to assist in providing more efficient and streamlined service delivery across the province. In an effort to ensure practices and procedures were consistent across the province, the ministry has initiated the Process Improvement Project. This project examines existing processes from across the province and other jurisdictions, determines the best practices, and develops and implements standardized processes province wide.

Objective 3

The ministry's working environment encourages productivity and innovation.

Key Strategies

Continue to implement effective health and safety programs and practices.

Performance Measures and Results

A safe and secure work environment is a priority. Assessments of security strategies and updates on local violence prevention plans began in 2003/04 and were 65 per cent completed by the end of that fiscal year. The ministry supports the formation of formal Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committees at all ministry offices.

New Measures (2004/05)

Percentage of employees with a personal learning plan.

Learning plans are tools designed to enhance employee satisfaction and performance toward ministry goals. A personal learning plan sets out the employee's goals for development, and efforts that will be made by the employee and the employer to support success.

Personal learning plans have been incorporated as an integral component of employee personal development plans. A higher percentage for this measure indicates that the ministry is successfully supporting employee success and career development, thereby making the ministry a more effective organization.

New Performance Measure	2003/04 Baseline	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target
Percentage of employees with a personal learning plan (NEW)	50%	75%	95%	95%

Goal 6

The Ministry Operates Effectively, Openly and Accountably.

Core Business Area: The Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal

Objective 1

Ministry processes and systems support accountability for results.

Key Strategies

Procure key services through an open, fair and transparent process and implement performance-based contracts.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 6.1: Percentage of program and service contracts that are performance-based.

Performance Measure	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
6.1 Percentage of program and service contracts that are performance-based	100%	95%	95%	0%	Yes

A performance-based contract links payments with the achievement or completion of a pre-determined deliverable. The deliverable must be measurable to evaluate the contractor's performance. Deliverables can be outputs (such as job descriptions, software packages, beds used in a hostel/shelter) or outcomes (such as employment program clients remaining independent of income assistance).

This performance measure is important because it helps assess the ministry's progress in becoming more accountable for results. Performance-based contracts ensure a high level of service quality, as well as cost-effective use of ministry resources. Payments to contracted service providers are tied directly to the results they achieve.

Objective 2

Individuals have access to an impartial and responsive appeal system.

Key Strategies

Continue to streamline client access through Electronic Services.

Performance Measures and Results

Measure 6.2: Percentage of appeal hearings commenced within 15 business days.

Performance Measure	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2003/04 Variance	Target Achieved
6.2 Percentage of appeal hearings commenced within 15 business days	99%	100%	99.8%	–0.2%	Yes

Timely appeals reduce uncertainty for clients and provide for more efficient use of ministry resources in administering appeals. The ministry demonstrated accountability, transparency and responsiveness in its decision-making and operations, in part, through these results. This performance measure allows the ministry to track the success of meeting this commitment to clients and improve the efficient use of resources.

The variance for this measure, representing two cases, resulted from an error that was caused during a systems upgrade used for tracking the progress of appeals. The systems upgrade is now complete which will ensure more accurate tracking and minimize the possibility of this situation in future.

Objective 3

Service delivery is streamlined and effective.

Key Strategies

Develop shared platforms and systems to improve capacity for integrated and coordinated monitoring and reporting across the ministry.

Performance Measures and Results

No specific performance measure has been identified for this objective. The ministry continued to develop shared platforms and systems to improve coordinated monitoring and reporting. Regional realignment, which occurred in September 2003, reduced the number of ministry regions from nine to five. This realignment not only streamlined service delivery within the ministry but also allowed for more integrated service coordination with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Ministry of Health Services. The Ministry of Human Resources' regions now align with both of these other provincial ministries.

New Measures (2004/05)

1. Percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers.

Electronic fund transfers are an efficient means of providing income assistance to clients. They reduce costs, ensure payments are delivered through a verified process, and other numerous advantages over the issuance of paper cheques, to both clients and the ministry.

Data available from 2002/03 can establish a baseline. A higher percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers indicates that the ministry is successfully using technology-based options to provide streamlined and effective service.

New Performance Measure	2002/03 Baseline	2003/04 Target	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target
Percentage of clients using electronic fund transfers (NEW)	38.7%	42%	42%	45%	50%

2. Comprehensive strategic risk profile completed.

The ministry is implementing enterprise-wide risk management by identifying and assessing service plan risks at a process and operational level. The assessment will include the likelihood and effectiveness of controls in managing these risks, and a strategic risk profile will be developed. This measure indicates success in identifying, assessing and profiling strategic risks facing the ministry. The target for future years is to complete risk profiles for all identified strategic risks.

New Performance Measure	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target
Comprehensive strategic risk profile completed (NEW)	100%	100%	100%

3. Percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within ten business days.

Clients have the right to request ministry decisions be reconsidered. This is an internal ministry process — a 'second look' — that is separate from the external appeal process. For this measure, the ten business days begin when the client returns a signed Request for Reconsideration to the Employment and Assistance office or to the regional office. The Reconsideration Adjudicator reviews the information, and makes a new decision. If unsatisfied, a client may appeal this decision to the Employment and Appeal Tribunal office.

This measure reflects changes to ministry procedures and the introduction of the reconsideration process. A higher percentage for this measure indicates the ministry is doing a better job of meeting regulatory requirements and of providing timely and efficient service to clients.

New Performance Measure	2003/04 Baseline	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target
Percentage of reconsideration decisions that are made within ten business days (NEW)	81.9%	86%	87%	88%

Deregulation

As part of the government's *New Era* commitment and the government's 2002/03 – 2004/05 Strategic Plan, ministries agreed to reduce regulatory requirements by one-third over a three-year period. In June 2001, the ministry set a target to reduce regulatory requirements by 688 by June 2004. Upon review of the determination of this regulatory reduction requirement it was determined that there were 82 items in the initial count that should not have been included. This reduces the reduction requirements to 606.

As a result of this review the ministry has met the regulatory reduction by achieving a 34.3 per cent reduction, ahead of the June 2004 deadline. A simpler and more understandable legislative framework for British Columbia's income assistance system has reduced redundancy and regulatory overlap. By reaching this target ahead of schedule, the ministry supports government's steady progress toward its deregulation goals.

Report on Resources

Introduction

The annual budget is based on core business assumptions contained in the ministry's three-year Service Plan. The plan utilized forecasts of expenditure and caseload trends, plus anticipated impacts of legislative, policy and program changes. Ministry overall financial results were sensitive to fluctuations in caseload and program demand. The ministry manages its core businesses with the objective of achieving its overall budget.

Explanation of Variances

Employment Programs

The under-expenditure of $28.1 million or 25 per cent reflects a declining caseload in general. Many clients with employment obligations have been assisted through various ministry job training and placement services and programs.

Temporary Assistance

The under-expenditure of $70.5 million or 16 per cent is the result of:

- A decline in the Expected to Work category. The temporary assistance actual average caseload was just over 55,000, nine per cent lower than the budgeted average caseload of 61,000; and
- A change to case mix and costing used for the 2003/04 budget resulting in the ministry reallocating $47 million from temporary assistance to continuous assistance during the fiscal year.

Continuous Assistance

The over-expenditure of $100.3 million or 23 per cent is the result of:

- Higher than anticipated costs and rates of growth in the Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers caseloads. The Persons with Disabilities actual caseload average was just over 50,000, six per cent higher than the budgeted average caseload of 47,500. The Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers actual caseload was just over 10,600, six per cent higher than the budgeted average caseload of 10,000; and
- A change to case mix and costing used for the 2003/04 budget resulting in the ministry reallocating $47 million from temporary assistance to continuous assistance during the fiscal year.

Supplementary Assistance

The under-expenditure of $24.5 million or 12 per cent is the result of lower than anticipated expenditures in Health Assistance, Seniors Supplement, and other supplementary support services.

Employment and Assistance Appeals Tribunal

The under-expenditure of $0.9 million or 35 per cent is due to lower than anticipated operating costs.

Capital Expenditures

The ministry's capital budget was under spent by $8.9 million or 58 per cent due to changing priorities in the information technology capital plan.

Resource Summary by Core Business Areas

	Estimated	Other Authorizations	Total Estimated	Actual	Variance
Operating Expenses ($000)					
Employment Programs	110,108	0	110,108	82,034	28,074
Temporary Assistance	451,252	0	451,252	380,764	70,489
Continuous Assistance	444,350	0	444,350	544,657	-100,307
Supplementary Assistance	195,786	0	195,786	171,323	24,463
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	2,417	0	2,417	1,548	869
Executive and Support Services	213,580	0	213,580	213,712	-132
Total	**1,417,493**	**0**	**1,417,493**	**1,394,037**	**23,456**
Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)					
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	14	0	14	12	2
Executive and Support Services	2,296	0	2,296	2,278	18
Total	**2,310**	**0**	**2,310**	**2,290**	**20**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (CRF) ($000)					
Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal	35	0	35	0	35
Executive and Support Services	15,293	0	15,293	6,340	8,953
Total	**15,328**	**0**	**15,328**	**6,340**	**8,988**

Appendix A

Overview of Ministry Goals

The 2003/04 – 2005/06 Service Plan outlines the ministry goals and achievements covered by this Annual Service Plan Report. The ministry has six goals to reflect the six core business areas set out in the Service Plan. The performance measures focus on tracking and reporting on a core set of indicators. The indicators include client results, financial results, productivity and efficiency and organizational health.

Goal 1

BC Employment and Assistance Clients Achieve Independence Through Sustained Employment.

Objective 1

Clients find employment through work search and job placement services.

Objective 2

Clients acquire specific job skills through targeted training for employment.

Objective 3

Persons with disabilities who seek work are supported through employment programs.

Key Strategies

- *Refer clients to the Job Placement program.* This program assists the most job-ready BC Employment and Assistance clients to obtain sustainable employment. Depending on client needs, service providers deliver a range of pre-placement, employment placement and post-placement services and supports. All Job Placement Program contracts are performance-based (i.e., service providers receive payments when they place clients in jobs and support them to maintain employment and remain independent of assistance).
- *Refer clients to the Training for Jobs pilot program.* Focuses on people who have barriers to employment, the Training for Jobs program provides specific employability and technical skills and job placement opportunities needed to gain sustainable employment. Contractors identify specific training needs, train people, and place them in jobs and provide job retention supports and services.
- *Implement the second phase of the Employment Strategy for Persons with Disabilities.* The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD) supports the efforts of persons with disabilities to increase their employability and independence to the greatest degree possible. Disability supports for employment are a key component of the program. The ministry has created a range of specialized supports such as technical equipment,

physical accommodation and follow-up workplace support that allows persons with disabilities to participate in employment.

Goal 2

BC Employment and Assistance Services Support Self-Reliance.

Objective 1

Enquirers actively seek work.

Objective 2

Applicants and clients enter into employment plans as a condition of eligibility.

Key Strategies

- *Require enquirers to undertake a three-week self-directed work search.* Conducting a work search is a requirement of all individuals who contact the ministry to request income assistance and must be completed prior to an application for assistance. The immediate focus by the enquirer on job search reduces the average time spent on assistance. Enquirers are provided with a work search package that provides tools and information on effective job seeking and how to keep clear records demonstrating their job search efforts.
- *Establish mandatory obligations to meet employment plan goals for all clients.* Employment plans are a condition of eligibility for all clients with employment obligations. These plans outline employment objectives for clients and identify strategies or programs to assist clients to move towards employment.
- *Require all existing clients to complete employment plans and review their eligibility.* This strategy is consistent with the ministry's value of being accountable for results.

Goal 3

BC Employment and Assistance Services Provide Continuous Assistance to Those Clients Most in Need.

Objective 1

Persons with multiple barriers participate in their communities.

Objective 2

Persons with disabilities work or volunteer, as they are able.

Objective 3

Assistance is provided to individuals who are not able to achieve independence through employment.

Key Strategies

- *Refer multiple barriered clients to the Community Assistance Program (CAP) for services that assist them to participate in their communities.* CAP was originally designed specifically for clients who were not yet job-ready to assist them in reducing barriers to employment. In 2003/04 the program was facilitated through partnerships between the ministry and local communities, the program provides pre-employment services at the community level that support self-reliance and assist clients who have multiple barriers to employment. Refinements to programs available to Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB) in 2004/05 will help this group move towards achieving greater self-reliance.
- *Implement programs for persons with disabilities that assist clients to find employment or to participate in the community, as they are able.* The Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities provides a range of specialized services that allows persons with disabilities with different needs to take advantage of employment and employment-related opportunities.
- *Provide continuous assistance and support services to those clients most in need.* Continuous assistance is provided to individuals who are less likely to become independent of assistance. The ministry recognizes these clients may move toward being more self-reliant and the ministry will continue to provide supports at a level appropriate to the individual's need.

Goal 4

BC Employment and Assistance Services Provide Supplementary Assistance to Eligible Clients.

Objective 1

Homeless individuals have access to safe emergency accommodation.

Objective 2

Individuals and families have access to short-term disaster assistance through the Emergency Social Services (ESS) program.

Objective 3

Eligible clients have access to supplementary health services.

Objective 4

Eligible seniors and Persons with Disabilities have access to public transit.

Key Strategies

- *Provide emergency accommodation to the homeless who have no other resources.* The ministry is committed to providing assistance to those who are most in need. The ministry provides funding for emergency shelters. Funds provided support year round

emergency accommodation, as well as additional accommodation during winter months, if needed. This is consistent with the ministry role of providing services to individuals in need and moving individuals toward self-reliance.

- *Provide short-term assistance through the ESS Program to those forced from their homes by disasters.* This includes providing assistance to British Columbians who are forced to leave their homes because of fire, floods, earthquakes or other emergencies. This assistance includes lodging, food, clothing, emotional support and reuniting families.
- *Provide designated health services to those who are eligible.* The ministry recognizes that some clients have special health needs, which is why supplementary health assistance is provided to those who are eligible. This assistance ranges from essential medical transportation to medical equipment and supplies. Supplementary health assistance also includes dental and optical coverage, and orthotics and bracing as well as other therapeutic services.
- *Provide low cost public transit passes to eligible seniors and Persons with Disabilities.* The ministry supports low-income seniors and persons with disabilities by providing subsidized bus passes. Bus passes are issued on a calendar year basis and can be purchased at any time of the year. Replacement passes are also provided at a minimal cost. This replacement fee escalates with the number of passes replaced.

Goal 5

The Ministry is a Responsive and Motivating Employer.

Objective 1

Employees have the tools to adapt to and benefit from change.

Objective 2

The ministry recruits and retains a workforce that is competent, capable and flexible.

Objective 3

Staff actions align with ministry goals and objectives.

Objective 4

The ministry's working environment encourages productivity and innovation.

Key Strategies

- *Consistently address change management issues in all ministry project plans.* The ministry has undergone a number of changes over the last two years. These changes range from temporary and continuous assistance policy changes to changes in staffing, service delivery, and regional boundaries, and workforce adjustment. In recognition of these substantial changes the ministry ensures that change management strategies are employed for all ministry changes.

- *Define core competencies and selection standards for key positions.* The recruitment and retention of qualified staff to administer ministry programs is essential to ensure clients are supported and the ministry meets its goals and measures. Identifying the core competencies and standardizing hiring processes ensures ministry staff are qualified to meet ministry needs.
- *Implement employee performance, planning, development and review processes and tools.* As part of a cross-government initiative, the ministry is implementing the Employee Performance and Development Plan (EPDP). This process supports employees in achieving their performance and development goals, which are aligned with ministry goals. To assist employees with preparing their EPDP, employees are provided with resources, tools and training.
- *Continue to implement effective health and safety programs and practices.* This strategy continues the ministry's history of providing health and wellness support to staff. The ministry provides supports to staff that are over and above Occupational Health and Safety requirements by promoting healthy lifestyles and providing tools to reduce stress, as well as emotional support for staff and families through the Employee and Family Assistance Program.

Goal 6

The Ministry Operates Effectively, Openly and Accountably.

Objective 1

Ministry processes and systems support accountability for results.

Objective 2

Service delivery is streamlined and effective.

Objective 3

Individuals have access to an impartial and responsive appeal system.

Key Strategies

- *Continue to streamline client access through Electronic Services.* This ministry continues to deliver essential programs and services to our clients through the use of new technology and more efficient practices. The majority of services can be provided over the phone or online. Clients who live in remote areas of the province or in places where offices have been amalgamated continue to be served effectively.
- *Measure ministry performance by undertaking client interviews, research, data tracking and reporting.* This strategy includes the development and publication of the Service Plan and the Annual Service Plan Report.
- *Develop shared platforms and systems to improve the capacity for integrated and coordinated monitoring and reporting across the ministry.* A joint initiative between Planning, Performance and Data Services Branch and the Information Management Branch

is underway to develop and implement a framework to address the current and future analysis and reporting needs of the ministry, and enhance the integrity and security of integrated corporate information. MARS, the ministry data warehouse provides an avenue for reporting performance measurement, performance forecasting and program planning information to executive and staff throughout the ministry. As the teams work together to define and implement the framework, they will leverage the investment in MARS, and in parallel, will examine current industry and government best practices in an effort to continually improve the access to and reliability of the ministry's information asset. These initiatives will enable the ministry to better forecast and plan for future challenges.

- *Procure key services through an open, fair and transparent process and implement performance-based contracts*. The ministry is committed to operating programs that are results-based with clear outcomes and full accountability to the taxpayer. A top priority of this government is to ensure responsible, accountable management of public resources and tax dollars.